

How to Build Your SEO Site Structure

A step-by-step process using competitor research to plan a site that ranks

What Is This Process?

Most people guess their site structure. This method removes the guesswork. Instead of starting from scratch, you reverse-engineer what is already working in your niche by studying the sites Google is already rewarding with first-page rankings.

The output is a data-backed sitemap you can hand directly to a developer or use to brief an agency.

At a Glance

#	Step	What you do
1	Identify Your Target Keyword	Search Google in incognito for the keyword you want to rank for
2	Save Competitors to Google Sheets	Record the top 10 organic results in a structured sheet
3	Audit Every Competitor Page	Visit each site and list every page they have published
4	Build Your Site Structure	Use the patterns you find to design your own sitemap

Step 1

Search for Your Target Keyword

Open Google in an **incognito window** so your browsing history does not skew the results. Type in the exact keyword or phrase you want your website to rank for.

Examples:

- "WhatsApp automation Dubai"
- "best physiotherapy clinic Abu Dhabi"
- "corporate catering services UAE"

Why incognito?

Google personalises results based on your location and browsing history. Incognito gives you a neutral view of what a fresh visitor would see.

Step 2

Save the Top Competitors to Google Sheets

Look at the first page of organic results. Skip ads, featured snippets, and directory listings like Yelp or Yellow Pages. You want the actual business or content websites.

Open a new Google Sheet and create the following columns:

#	Website URL	Domain Name	Notes
1	https://example.com	example.com	Blog-heavy
2	https://competitor2.com	competitor2.com	Services + FAQ
3

Aim to capture **8 to 10 competitors**. You do not need to go beyond page one.

Pro tip: Add a 'Domain Authority' column and populate it using Moz Link Explorer or Ahrefs Webmaster Tools (both free). This helps you prioritise which competitors to study most closely.

Step 3

Visit Each Website and List All Their Pages

For every competitor you saved, visit their website and document every page they have published. You are looking for:

- Home page
- Service or product pages
- Location pages (e.g. "Dentist in Dubai Marina")
- Blog posts and resource articles
- About, Team, and Contact pages
- FAQ pages
- Case study or testimonial pages
- Category or archive pages

Add a second sheet called **Page Inventory** with these columns:

Competitor URL	Page URL	Page Type	Page Title
example.com	/services/whatsapp-chatbot	Service	WhatsApp Chatbot Dubai
example.com	/blog/whatsapp-api-guide	Blog	WhatsApp API Guide 2025
competitor2.com	/dubai	Location	WhatsApp Automation Dubai

To find pages faster, type this into Google:

`site:competitordomain.com`

This shows all indexed pages for that domain. Also scroll through the site's navigation menu and footer links to catch pages that might not rank individually.

Step 4

Build Your Site Structure from the Patterns

Once you have audited all competitors, patterns will emerge. You will notice that every top-ranking site has certain page types in common. Those are the pages you need.

Look for:

- Pages appearing across 7+ competitors — these are **essential**.
- Page types only 1 or 2 competitors have — these may be gaps you can fill first.
- Depth of their blog — if all competitors have 50+ articles, volume matters in your niche.

Use your findings to draft a simple sitemap:

Section	Pages to Create	Priority
Core	Home, About, Contact	Must have
Services	One page per service	Must have
Locations	One page per city / area	High
Blog	10 articles to start	Medium
Trust	Testimonials, Case Studies, FAQ	Medium

Why This Works

You are not guessing. You are using live ranking data from Google to understand exactly what content and site architecture performs in your niche. The sites on page one have been validated by thousands of searches and years of optimisation.

By mapping their structure *before* you build, you avoid the most common SEO mistake: launching a website with the wrong pages, then trying to fix it after the fact.

One final note:

This research does not mean you copy your competitors. It means you understand the baseline, then find the gaps. Build what everyone has — then add what nobody else has created yet.